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A knowledge Repository**VICTIM OF FATE: A STUDY ON SHASHI DESHPANDE'S
“THE DARK HOLDS NO TERROR”****Dr. V. Sekhar** ^{*1} (M.A., B.ED., M.Phil., Ph.D.)^{*1} Associate Professor, Department of English, National College Trichy, INDIA**ABSTRACT**

An undisputed fact admitted by the characters in Shashi Deshpande's "The Dark Holds No Terror", that fate plays an important role in men and women's life. Shashi Deshpande tends to be tragic in her novel as she describes the fate of a girl. Sarita, the heroine of this novel, has to pass through difficult situations all of her life which she has suffered without any fault of hers. Sarita has recounted how she is alienated from her parents, how she has determined to become a doctor, how she get trapped in love of Manohar. Incidents and accidents has happened in such a way that she couldn't have happiness in life. She said to herself in moment of dejection, 'But why is happiness so unreal? Why does it always seem an illusion? It is grief that a bulk, a weight, a substance, and slays real even after years. Happiness is so evanescent, nothing is left' (40).

Keywords:*Fate, Victim, Love, Marriage, Sex, Violence.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Sarita's life is a succession of incidents which come one after another, to deprive her of even simplest of joys. Her life begins with the charge of killing her brother Dhruva. As she has gone out of the house to show her anger to her parents for not allowing her to go to the film with Smita's family. Deshpande highlights how children very often show their resentment against the parents, but when Sarita does it, her brother, has coddled and self-willed person, follows her and has drowned. Though she has made to retrieve her brother, but she couldn't succeed. This incident has stuck as quandary to her till the end. This stroke of fate has alienated her from her mother completely. Her mother often uses to say that she is the murderer and has reprimanded that she could also have died. These kind of stinging words is wounded her and she could not bear the false allegation and inevitably she becomes the victim of this accident which she no more responsible for that. Even when she has proposed to go to the Medical College, her mother said that she wouldn't be able to spare money for this purpose, as she has to spend on her

marriage. Her father is pusillanimous, a timid fellow, a non-entity type. Sarita consequently has deprived of love from her childhood. This particular fact of her life becomes the cause to a great extent for her miseries.

Sarita was a girl of great determination and self-restraint, as a victim of fate she meets Manohar. She falls love with Manohar at first sight. Her friend, Smita, has taken her to a function though she has no desire to go there, she has struck by Manohar's features and mannerisms, she observed, 'straight dark thick eye-brows, a firm chin (and whoever had said that a receding chin is a sign of weakness) full lips, almost as full as a woman's. And that mannerism of his, of pushing his hair back with one hand, showing off his slim long fingers' (51). In the second meeting she has snowed under by his qualities. But Sarita's determination to go to Medical College has saved her not to be blindfolded towards love. She recalled, 'reality was different and I never let it go, not for a moment. And that was my approaching exams, my studied, likely questions...the reproductive system of a frog... and what if I did not get a first class, after all?' (54) She has concealed the emotion of love. By her courage and hard work, she has joined the Medical College. She has the forecast of becoming a doctor and live life happily. But fate has played a brutal trick with her, which is Manohar appeared in the college canteen which he is nothing to do with medical college or canteen, he has seen in the canteen on several days, but sarita doesn't met him, but fate has sent him there to re-awake the love in Sarita heart which she couldn't disregard. Finally, on an unfortunate day she has gone to meet him. And she has met the man of her dreams, yet she never thought that he would respond her emotions so quickly. She never expects this would happen in her life because she has told by her mother that she is not beautiful to attract anybody, 'you will never be good looking. You are too dark for that... looking at yourself in the mirror! I'll give you a certificate to say that you're beautiful. Will that satisfy you' (61). she has elated when the man of her dreams comes true and her deprivation of love, unexpectedly quick success in winning the heart of her dream man, she has a blind love with him and she becomes a trapped girl in the hands of fate "and that he, a man set apart from others, above the others... how callow they seemed now, the boys in my class... should love me seemed even more incredible. The fisherman's daughter couldn't have been more surprised when the king asked her to marry him' (66) as a result she has given herself up to him.

The circumstances arise is not in her own construction which has wrapped up in a secret hand of fate, that Sarita has fettered in a difficult situation. Manohar tells sarita that he cannot live without her any more that the longest life is too short for him in her love. One day he said to sarita that it would be painful for her to be separated from her parents, but being blind love upon him she has denied his words saying, 'Do you know, Manu, how easy it is to cut the umbilical cord and separate the baby from the mother? ligate, cut and it is done. There is scarcely any bleeding either' (39). she has spoken in this streak because she has already alienated from her parents. The fate has twisted the circumstances that she has left her parents with no thought of chance of right perspective. She has married manohar who has told her plainly that he wouldn't be able to pay rent of a house and would keep his doctor-wife in a chawl, in stinking lanes, with ruffian-type neighbors around. She recollected after things went awry- 'I was eleven again and trapped in that strange room and that friend of mine' (37). The fate denies her peace that she is not able to live in peace even in the chawl. The neighbours comes to know that a lady doctor has come to live in their midst. They begin to take advantage of this situation. A woman has knocked at the door and asked Manu whether the doctor at home. The woman wants to consult the doctor

for her child; Sarita is gaining honour and respect among the neighbours that made Manohar to lose his mental equilibrium. He has felt he is smaller than his wife in public. To make the situation worse the correspondent girl has asked him how he feels when his wife is earning bread and butter. Thus Manohar has continued to get bouts of depression, sarita does her M.D., becomes Assistant Honorary, set up consulting room, she is mounting in her status and respect. This upset Manohar entirely and has made him psychopath. There is no denying that manohar had to suffer due to the better position of his wife, but sarita is not to blame. It is nothing but fate that she has a husband as brittle as a mirror he became victim of neglect in public and private. He has started gnawing and beating his wife, how long she could bear the violence silently every night and how long she could live with a psychopath she even thought of divorcing Manohar.

The fate not let her free from the burden, because meeting with padma, who he has been partner in dissection at the medical college, Saru is not comfortable with other boys in the initial stages, expect with Padma. When they have met again after a long time they have gone back to Akbarally's for a cup of coffee. And they have started meeting frequently and having together tea or coffee becomes a habit with them. Padma has no way but to admit that he has enjoyed meeting her, with a tacit assurance that it is 'an innocent happiness'. Soon he becomes pitable as he said that he has no one to talk to, as for his wife, he said that she has talked only about household affairs, such as servants and the children, which would soon become boring. It is clear to her that Padma is seeking for joy of her company which his wife has failed to give. She has thought that she has justified in trying to find happiness with another man. She put the question to herself 'wasn't it always the solution for a woman who found no happiness with one man to try and find it with another'(132). Which She has admitted herself to the fate and propose an obvious answer is that she was right in doing that. Yet she has feared that the search for the innocent happiness might finally end up in despicable extra- marital sex, because she knows that 'the code word of our age is neither love nor romance, but sex' which is dirty word for her. Therefore she has to leave her hopes on love and romance in her life which she has been the illusions to her,' suddenly I felt cold as if I was left alone in the middle of nowhere, one more hideout discovered, one more illusion destroyed'(133) which she has revitalized her thought from the hands of the fate.

To escape from the Manu torment, she has decided to run away from him and she comes to live with her father, but she is an unwelcome guest in her father's house. Naturally she has to ask her father,'baba does it troubles you to have me here? Tell if it does, I can go to a hotel' (18).Nevertheless, he said that she could stay here, besides 'I'm afraid things aren't very clean or comfortable. You may find it difficult' (19).Thus it is not whole-hearted welcome. When she has moved towards the room, her father called out and said , 'that's Madhav's room'(19),she has offered the puja room, a straw mat and a pillow to lie on, it shows that even the room of hers not belongs to her it's the doom that she has to accept. Then she told her father that she has scared of him not for what he has done to her but what she has done to him that is she has felt guilty for the present situation of her husband. He is suffering from a sense of being inferior to his wife. She knows,' Perhaps there is something in the male she now thought, that is whittled down and ultimately destroyed by female domination' (85). She is sorry for all that has happened to Dhruva, her mother and her husband,'my mother died because I heedlessly turned by back on him. My mother died alone because I deserted her. My husband is a failure because I destroyed his manhood' (217)'. Though she has not done anything deliberately, it is absolutely due to the

fate which she has under gone .This repentance has showed her the new blossom in her life. She is regretful because she has involved in all of these tragedies though she has no intention to do any harm to any of them. It is absolutely due to fate, which is beyond her control. Being a girl of blameless, she has thought, 'her cruelty to Dhruva, to her mother, to Manu. She would never be rid of it. She would carry this ugly, unbearable burden until she died. The façade of deception had cracked so completely she should never put it together again. Shafts of the truth pierced her, causing her unbearable pain. Atonement..? It was never possible. What had she imagined? What had she thought?'(212). She realized that she was 'the guilty sister, the undutiful daughter, the unloving wife' (220), therefore She thought instead of leaving her ailing husband, she should get him treated for his disease. First she told her father not to open the door to Manohar. But, as she is leaving for Sunita's house, she has advised her father to ask manohar to wait for her, the chance of fate has changed the course of her life by the chance of arrival of Sunita's brother.

2. CONCLUSION

Deshpande says that fate play an important role in men and women's life. Sarita has been the victim of fate, though it cannot be said that she has surrendered before fate. She has been struggling, yet happiness always eluded her. Sarita has impressed by at Virginia woolf's expression 'a room of her own' as women's right, she has remembered that her mother doesn't have a room of her own in any way'' she retreated into the kitchen to dress up, she sat in this dingy room to comb her hair and apply her kumkum, she slept in her bed like overnight guest in a strange place. And I have so much my mother lacked, but neither she nor I have that thing 'a room of our own' (135).It clearly proves that Shashi Deshpande's protagonist is fettered in the hands of fate.

3. REFERENCES

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